

27 February 2006

Families and Friends of The Jokers

Greetings again from Camp Taji, Iraq. I can't believe that we are more than a quarter of the way through our deployment. The company has settled and started to establish the rhythm for day to day events. I am very impressed with The Joker's performance thus far and receive continuous compliments for the Company's accomplishments and hard work.

As most of you already know, Charlie Company will spend the next couple of months working at a new operating base located further to the south which I call "the deployment within a deployment". Just about everyone in the company will spend a portion of the next few months operating in support of this southern mission. Alpha Company just completed their rotation and Charlie Company is "next in the shoot". I am told that the living conditions mirror what we have at Camp Taji, with the soldiers sharing trailer type accommodations. The dining facility is as good if not better and the laundry has a quicker turn around. Communications to the states is just about identical and hopefully will be transparent to all of you. Mail will continue to find us as we move south but may take a day or two longer. Overall the move south is temporary and for all will be a welcomed change of pace.

The Jokers accomplishments and successes continue to build. SGT Irvin was recently selected as the Battalion Non-Commissioned Officer of the Quarter and was recognized by the Division Sergeant Major. As 1SG Thomas tells it, SGT Irvin's performance in front of the board was impressive. Next month he will compete for the Brigade NCO of the Quarter and we know he'll represent the Jokers well. CPL Yeagle, now SGT Yeagle was promoted to the well deserved rank of sergeant. Charlie Company recognized SGT Yeagle's hard work ethic and devotion to duty and promoted him to corporal last fall. The Army finally realized what the Jokers have always know, SGT Yeagle is ready for the next level. We expect great things from this outstanding NCO. Also at the beginning of February we promoted CW2 Boehm to CW3. CW3 Boehm recently proved his worth when the company first set "boots on the ground" at Camp Taji. CW3 Boehm, with the help of the NCOs, established all the maintenance processes and procedures the company will follow for our tenure in Iraq. CW3 Boehm has already impressed us all and we look forward to his continued successes.

The first two Jokers have already left theater on leave. Just about everyone in the company will get an opportunity to take leave if they were in theater for 12 months. We are doing our best to provide predictability on exact leave dates. The exact dates and number of slots for the following month usually comes to the company in the first or second week of the preceeding month. Depending on when the soldiers are leaving will determine how much time they get to plan for vacations. We will continue to try and get more fidelity but it looks as though that timeline will not change.

I hear great things about all of you. The Charlie Company FRG sounds very close and I know all of us rest a little easier knowing that all of you are taking care of each other. I continue to maintain my open email policy and please contact me with any issues at

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Regards,

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